

A Mama Moment for our moms - Medshield medical scheme

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Medshield Mom invited young mothers, new mothers and expecting mothers to *Take a Mama Moment* at a special high tea event in Johannesburg on Saturday, 18 March. The sold-out first-ever Medshield Mom event was a resounding success, with Reach for a Dream benefitting from the ticket sales.

"In life, you need a partner to rely on. Medshield is that partner," said Setsooto Sihawu, executive: marketing and corporate communications at Medshield Medical Scheme, during her opening address. "Today is all about empowering our motherhood community, and providing moms and moms-to-be with the tools and information to help navigate parenthood."

Medshield Mom is an initiative by Medshield Medical Scheme to support moms on their journey through motherhood. This past weekend's Medshield Mom event encouraged mothers to *Take a Mama Moment* in the company of other mothers.

Medshield member, brand ambassador, event host and revered mom, Mpoomy Ledwaba welcomed guests and emphasised that the day was about taking a moment for themselves as both mothers and women. "The journey of motherhood and wellness go hand-in-hand. If you are well, your family is well. It is important to make time for yourself, as a woman and mother," said Ledwaba.



Moms know that prioritising time for themselves is a challenging thing to do. Finding the balance between raising a newborn and maintaining a sense of normalcy is often hard for new mothers. Through all these changes, it's essential to lean on someone and reassure yourself that you are never alone. Embracing change can be difficult, but be bold and discuss it.

Psychologist Rakhi Beekrum delivered the keynote for the day. She shared guidance on mindful parenting, healthy boundaries, self-care and the emotional tax of navigating mom guilt. There is nothing worse for a child than feeling unseen and unvalidated. It does not mean that they aren't loved. Parents do the very best they can with what they know. We are more fortunate than our parents to have access to the resources we have today." Her keynote embodied how mothers reflect on past experiences and how children learn from mothers – how to deal with difficult emotions and communicate.

"To be a mindful mom, think about your earliest memories. Think about your earliest memories of your mother or

grandmother," Beekrum mentioned while reflecting on her own. "When I think about my earliest memories, I realise that moms ate last. They fed the kids and men, and moms ate last. The same applies to everything else in their lives. I don't think we grew up with role models who showed us what it means to care for ourselves. So that is why we think self-care is selfish because our mothers were self-sacrificing, and it was praised. So even though we know self-care is important, we struggle."

Founder and Chief Mom at BabyYumYum, Amanda Rogaly, facilitated a holistic panel discussion on navigating parenthood with psychologist and parenting consultant Naomi Holdt, doctor and health advocate Dr Nosipho Mhlanga, Rakhi Beekrum and Mpoomy Ledwaba.



The conversation reflected on the panellists' experience of motherhood – the impact of Covid-19, concerns around emotional education for children, and healthy eating habits for children. Mental healthcare for children and families was a recurring theme during the day. The panel discussion reflected the importance of mothers being kind to themselves and their motherhood journey.

During the panel discussion, Naomi Holdt emphasised that every single emotion is valid and anger should not be punished, "Where do we get this idea that certain emotions are good and certain emotions are bad? Anger is a healthy emotion. It is a defence against vulnerability. It is a message, and there is a need behind every message, and 99.9% of that need is connection."

Guests were serenaded by musician Timothy Moloi whilst enjoying delicious food and drinks. The surprise lucky draw prizes and goodie bags were an added bonus! The environment was considerate towards mothers, and Ledwaba called it a "safe space", which Medshield Medical Scheme captured beautifully – making all guests feel at home.

Reach for a Dream benefitted from the proceeds from ticket sales. "Thank you to Medshield for choosing Reach for a Dream as the beneficiary for this event," said Natalie Lazaris, head of business for Reach for a Dream. "Today would not be possible without all of Medshield's guests. Reach for a Dream is a charity that fulfils the dreams of children fighting a disease or illness from ages 3 to 18. These children are fighting their greatest battle – their health. For their families, that is their hardest struggle. Three-year-old children may not always know their illness, but their families do. And they have to be there every moment," said Lazaris, adding that Reach for a Dream tries to support families going through the difficult time."

The event showcased Medshield's commitment to women and especially mothers with their Medshield Mom offering that assists women on their journey to motherhood through all the various stages of pregnancy, birth and postpartum, ensuring that parents and parents-to-be are aware of the pregnancy-related benefits they enjoy as Medshield members. The website,

www.medshieldmom.co.za, is an easy-to-use online resource to access a hub of important content related to health, fitness, nutrition, the body, motherhood, babies, toddlers and more, all suited to the pre-and postpartum phases.

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